

News Release

Kisatchie National Forest to Temporarily Close Wilderness Area of Kisatchie Ranger District for Controlled Burn



USDA Forest Service Kisatchie National Forest

Release: Immediate

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Pineville, La. (February 14, 2013) – Kisatchie National Forest will close the Wilderness Area of the Kisatchie Ranger District on Friday, February 15th until further notice for a controlled burn or “prescribed burn.” The Wilderness area is made up of 8,700 acres of forest with some of the most unusually steep and rugged terrain to be found in Louisiana.

There are four trails located in the Wilderness Area: the Backbone Trail, the Highridge Trail, Long Leaf Vista Trail and Turpentine Hill Trail all of these will close on Friday. Forest visitors can contact the Kisatchie Ranger District Office at (318) 472-1840 for specifics on when the trails will re-open.

Kisatchie National Forest conducts controlled or “prescribed” burns throughout the forest yearly. Fire is a tool used by forest managers to achieve several goals. First, as thick undergrowth increases and dead limbs and brush accumulate, the potential for a disastrous wildfire increases. Prescribed burning reduces dangerous forest fuels which build up over time.

Other positive effects from prescribed burning include preventing the spread of forest insect pests, disease and invasive species. Prescribed burning improves the habitat for wildlife species including wild turkey, song birds and the endangered red-cockaded woodpecker. Prescribed fire also provides for a quick release of nutrients resulting in rapid growth of mineral rich wildlife forage plants.

For more information about the closure of the Wilderness Area of the Kisatchie Ranger District call the Kisatchie Ranger District office at (318) 472-1840.

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